

# ***Silas Marner* by George Eliot**

## **Guided Reading Questions**

### **Chapter I**

1. Describe the setting of the story (time/place).
2. Describe Silas Marner's vocation.
3. Discuss Silas's physical handicap.
4. Describe how Silas is regarded by the people of Raveloe. What prompted this reaction?
5. What special talent do people believe Silas has?
6. Contrast Silas's life in Lantern Yard with that in Raveloe.
7. Recount the incident in Lantern Yard that changed Silas's life.
8. Who is William Dane? What kind of person is he?
9. Describe William Dane's relationship with Silas.

### **Chapter II**

10. Explain why Silas moved to Raveloe.
11. Describe how Silas spends his time. Why does he spend his time this way?
12. Explain what Silas did for Sally Oates. How do people respond to this?
13. What is the end result of Silas's helping Sally Oates?
14. Describe Silas's financial situation.
15. What is revealed about Silas's nature by the brown pot incident?
16. Up to this time, how long has Silas lived in Raveloe?

### **Chapter III**

17. Describe the social structure of the community.
18. What means does Eliot employ to inform us about the various characters?
19. Describe each member of the Cass family. In particular, what weakness does Godfrey display?
20. Explain Godfrey's social situation.

### **Chapter IV**

21. What characteristics of Dunstan are brought out through the incidents in this chapter?
22. How does Dunstan justify stealing Silas's gold to himself?
23. Silas's story began in Chapter I, and the story of the Cass brothers was introduced in Chapter III. How are the two plots starting to be brought together?

### **Chapter V**

24. What were Silas's actions and thoughts after finding his gold missing?
25. To what does Silas turn for comfort? When had he sought comfort before from the same source?
26. What hope does Silas have?
27. What action does this hope lead him to take?

### **Chapter VI**

28. Describe the Rainbow Inn.
29. Describe the role does Mr. Snell, the landlord takes in discussions.
30. Identify and describe each person at the Rainbow Inn that evening.
31. Contrast and compare the personalities in 30 above.

### **Chapter VII**

32. Explain why the guests at the Rainbow Bar are surprised to see Silas.
33. Describe how the guests react to Silas's story about the missing gold.
34. Describe how Silas's visit to the Rainbow Bar causes him to change socially.

### **Chapter VIII**

35. Describe how the story about the peddler grew.
36. What does the growth of this story reveal about the people of Raveloe?
37. Explain Godfrey's thinking as he contemplated telling his father about his situation.
38. To what extent were his thoughts and fears perfectly natural?

### **Chapter IX**

39. Characterize Squire Cass's relationship with his sons.
40. How different is the Squire from his sons?
41. To what extent might the state of the Cass home have been an influence on Godfrey and Dunstan's lives? In particular, on their current difficulties?
42. What hope does Godfrey have?
43. How has Godfrey's position changed?

### **Chapter X**

44. How is Dunstan's absence regarded?
45. What two theories about the robbery generally held?
46. Describe the change in the villagers' perception of Silas. How might you account for this change?
47. In what ways has Silas changed?
48. How is Christmas spent by the Cass family? By Silas?
49. What event is being anticipated? What are Godfrey's feelings about this event?

### **Chapter XI**

50. Describe Nancy Lammeter's feelings toward Godfrey.
51. Characterize the thoughts and opinions held by the various ladies about each other.
52. Compare the two Miss Lammeters, both in appearance and in personality.

53. What are the respective roles of the upper and the lower social levels at the party?
54. Describe the talk among the men.
55. During the evening's festivities, how much progress does Godfrey make in winning Nancy's approval?
56. Does he have any right to try and win her approval?

#### **Chapter XII**

57. What is Molly's plan? How does it end?
58. What is Silas's reaction upon finding the child?
59. What is the significance of Silas's mistaking the yellow curls for his gold?
60. What immediate change does the child bring about in Silas?
61. What discovery does Silas make at the end of the chapter?

#### **Chapter XIII**

62. What effect does Silas have on the gathering at the party? On Godfrey?
63. What is Silas's reaction to suggestions that the child should be taken from his care?
64. What justification does Silas offer for wanting to keep the child?
65. With what feelings does Godfrey return to the party?
66. What is your opinion of Godfrey at this time?

#### **Chapter XIV**

67. How does Silas come to learn how to care for the child?
68. What does Silas name the child? How does he arrive at the name?
69. What effect does Eppie have on Silas's life? (Consider how he spent his time and what he valued).
70. Describe Silas's efforts to discipline Eppie.

#### **Chapter XV**

71. In what ways is Godfrey a changed person?
72. What are Godfrey's main interests now? What are his hopes?
73. What had been decided on Dunstan?

#### **Chapter XVI**

74. Describe Eppie and the other major characters now that sixteen years have passed.
75. What changes are there in Silas's home?
76. What kind of person has Eppie grown to be? Cite evidence from the novel.
77. What are Eppie's plans for the future?

#### **Chapter XVII**

78. Describe the changes that have taken place in the Red House.
79. What is Godfrey's great unfulfilled desire? To what does he attribute this condition?
80. What is Nancy's reason for not agreeing to adopt a child?

81. Describe Nancy's personality and approach to life.
82. Overall, how successful do you believe Nancy and Godfrey's marriage has been?

#### **Chapter XVIII**

83. What discovery is made?
84. Why does Godfrey now confess all to Nancy?
85. How does Nancy handle Godfrey's news? What does this reveal about her character?
86. How might such a confession be accepted today?
87. What do Godfrey and Nancy decide to do?

#### **Chapter XIX**

88. What are Godfrey's arguments for adopting Eppie? Compare these arguments with those of Silas and Eppie.
89. What is it that Godfrey cannot understand?
90. Explain the mixture of feelings that Silas must have experienced.
91. How fully does Eppie comprehend the significance of her decision?
92. To what extent is Eppie's decision influenced by the social structure of Raveloe?

#### **Chapter XX**

93. What decisions are made by Godfrey?
93. What reasons might he have for these decisions?
94. Describe the state of Nancy and Godfrey's relationship. To what extent has Eppie's stand affected their relationship?
95. What changes are evident in Godfrey's character? What has he learned?

#### **Chapter XXI**

96. What do Silas and Eppie find when they return to Lantern Yard?
97. What significance does this chapter have to the novel as a whole?
98. What statement does Silas make that clearly shows the change he has undergone?

#### **Conclusion**

99. What contributions do Godfrey and Nancy make to Eppie's wedding?
100. Why do they not attend the festivities?